

Bidding Judgment 3: Doubles



The Takeout Double

- I know you know the basic uses of a takeout double.
- I will show you some cases where judgement comes into play.

Using a Double When Both Opponents Have Bid

North East South West
1 ♥ pass 2 ♥ dble

♠ A J 4 2
♥ J 2
♦ K Q 4 2
♣ K 4 3

- This is a basic takeout double for the unbid suits.
- RHO has a weak hand (10 points or fewer)
- Unless the opener has a big hand, your partner has 8-10 points.
- Partner will choose a suit.
You will not bid again.

Using a Double When Both Opponents Have Bid

North	East	South	West
1 ♦	pass	1 nt	dbld

♠ A J 4 2

♥ K 10 8 2

♦ 4 2

♣ K Q 3

- Once again RHO has a weak hand (5-10 points).
- Here, partner can choose any 2-level suit.
- Partner will choose a suit. You will not bid again.

Using a Double When Both Opponents Have Bid

North East South West
1 ♠ pass 2 ♦ dble ?

♠ A 2

♥ K Q 10 2

♦ 4 2

♣ K Q 9 8 3

- This is a much different situation.
- If the opponents are playing 2/1 your partner is busted.
- If not playing 2/1, RHO still has 10+ points.
- You get into this auction at your own risk.

Using a Double to Show a Strong Overcall

North East South West
1 ♥ pass pass dble ?

♠ A K J 9 6 4
♥ 10 2
♦ A Q 2
♣ A 8

- You have 18 points.
- Too strong for a simple overcall.
- Partner will bid diamonds or clubs.
- You will bid spades
- You don't need to jump.
- When you change suits, you tell partner that you have this kind of hand.

Using a Double to Show a Strong Overcall

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	dble	pass	1 ♠
pass	1nt		

East hand

♠ A K 4

♥ A J 5

♦ A Q 2

♣ Q 10 8 5

- You have 19 points.
- Too strong for a no trump overcall.
- When you bid 1nt after partner's bid, partner knows you have 18+ points.

Using a Double to Show a Strong Overcall

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	dbld	2 ♥	pass
pass	dbld		

- Partner is showing a weak hand, but you have enough to compete.
- With any fewer points, you would not bid again.

East hand

♠ A K J 4

♥ 7 5

♦ A Q 2

♣ A 10 8 5

Is It a Takeout or Penalty Double?

- Most low-level doubles are meant for takeout.
- Some high-level doubles are intended for takeout, while others are meant for penalty.
- You and your partner must have some agreements. Here are some usual agreements:
 - Doubles of natural suit bids through 4 ♥ are for takeout,
 - Doubles of natural suit bid of 4 ♠ or higher are for penalty.

Is It a Takeout or Penalty Double

North	East	South	West
4 ♠	dble	pass	pass

East hand

♠ K 10 4

♥ A 5

♦ A K 7 2

♣ Q 10 9 5

- You expect partner to pass.
- You expect to defeat the contract.
- Partner might choose to bid, but she should be really sure of making the contract.

Is It a Takeout or Penalty Double

North	East	South	West
4 ♥	dbl	pass	pass

- You expect partner to choose a suit.
- Partner might choose to defend, but she should make that choice carefully.

East hand

♠ K J 10 4

♥

♦ A Q J 9 2

♣ K Q 9 5

A Double of 1 No Trump is Penalty, Unless It Is Conventional

North	East	South	West
1nt	dbld	pass	pass

East hand

♠ A 6

♥ A 4

♦ K Q J 10 9 2

♣ Q J 5

- Many people play a conventional double over a 1nt opening bid.
- D.O.N.T. is an example.
- Absent a conventional meaning, a double of a one no trump opening bid is intended for penalty.

Agreement About Bidding After Partner Responds

- Most of the time, when you make a takeout double, you have described your hand.
- Any bidding after partner's initial response, is up to partner.
- There are exceptions.

Bidding After A Takeout Double

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	dbld	2 ♥	pass
pass	dbld		

East hand

♠ A J 10 6

♥ 4

♦ K Q 9 4 2

♣ A K J

- This hand would be a absolute minimum for a second takeout double.
- Partner surely would have made a bid if he has 6 or more points.
- This second double is for takeout.

Bidding After A Takeout Double

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	dbld	2 ♥	pass
pass	dbld	3 ♥	pass
pass	dbld		

East hand

♠ A J 10 6

♥ 4

♦ K Q 9 4 2

♣ A K J

- East's third double is penalty.
- You've given partner two chances to bid and she has declined.
- Obviously, partner's hand is a total bust.
- If you make a third double, you are on your own.

Bidding After A Takeout Double

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	dbld	2 ♥	2 ♠
3 ♥	??		

East hand

♠ A J 10 6

♥ 4

♦ K Q 9 4 2

♣ A K 6

- Partner's minimum bid shows 8 or fewer points.
- Since partner chose to bid when she was not forced to bid, she probably has close to 8 points.
- You have enough strength to bid at the 3 level.
- Your bid is competitive, not necessarily invitational.
- With anything less you would have passed.

Agreements On Advancing a Takeout Double

- Bidding after partner's takeout double:
 - With 0-8 points, bid at the cheapest available level.
 - If your RHO has bid, you show closer to 8 than 0.
 - With 9-11 points, you will bid jumping a level.
 - With 12+ points, you must get the partnership to game.
 - Bid the game directly.
 - Cue bid the opener's suit.

Bidding After A Takeout Double

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	dbld	pass	1 ♠

West hand

♠ Q 7 5 2

♥ 8 5 3

♦ K 9 4 2

♣ Q 6

- West bids 1 ♠ with less than 8 points.
- West would make this bid even if south has raised his partner's opening bid.

Bidding After A Takeout Double

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	dbld	2 ♥	pass

West hand

♠ Q 7 5 2

♥ 8 5 3

♦ 10 9 4 2

♣ J 6

- West's pass shows minimum values.
- West will bid spades, of course, if east doubles again.

Bidding After A Takeout Double

North East South West
1 ♥ dble pass 2 ♠

West hand

♠ A 7 5 2

♥ 8 5 3

♦ K J 4 2

♣ Q 6

- With 10 points, west jumps a level in response to partner's takeout double.
- Partner will know whether to bid the game or play a partscore.

Bidding After A Takeout Double

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	dble	Pass	4 ♠

West hand

♠ A 7 5 2

♥ 8 5 3

♦ K J 4 2

♣ A 6

- With 12. west knows that their side has a good chance for game and bids accordingly.
- East knows partner has opening count and can make a slam try if his hand is good enough.

Bidding After A Takeout Double

North	East	South	West
1 ♦	dbld	pass	2 ♦

West hand

♠ A 7 5 2

♥ K J 5 3

♦ 9 2

♣ A Q 6

- With 14, west knows that their side has a good chance for game, but employs a cue bid of the opponent's suit to ask partner to select a major suit.
- East just might have doubled with 4-3 in the major suits.
- Allowing partner to choose the major suit guarantees an 8-card fit.

Advancing a Takeout Double in No Trump

- When partner makes a takeout double, partner is short in the opponent's suit.
- Therefore, advancing in a suit is first priority.
- However, when you don't have a major suit fit and you have strength in the opponent's suit, no trump is often the best bid.

Advancing a Takeout Double in No Trump

- With a solid stopper in the opponent's suit and no better option:
 - Bid no trump at the minimum available level with 6-10 points
 - Bid no trump by jumping a level with 11-12 points
 - Bid game in no trump with 13+ points.

Advancing a Takeout Double in No Trump

North	East	South	West
1 ♦	dbld	Pass	1nt

- West has 7 points and a clear stopper in the opponent's suit.
- No major suit fit.

West hand

♠ Q 7 2

♥ 9 3

♦ A J 9 2

♣ 10 8 7 6

Advancing a Takeout Double in No Trump

North East South West
1 ♦ dble Pass 2nt

- West's jump to 2nt shows 11 or 12 points.
- Partner will know what to do.

West hand

♠ K 7 2

♥ 9 3

♦ A J 9 2

♣ K 8 7 6

Advancing a Takeout Double in No Trump

North	East	South	West
1 ♦	dbld	Pass	3nt

West hand

♠ K Q 2

♥ J 9 3

♦ A J 9

♣ Q 8 7 6

- With 13 points, west knows their side has a good chance for game.
- With no major suit fit, west bids the game in no trump.

Final Thought

- As a takeout doubler:
- One instinct you must suppress is the urge to raise partner's suit in a competitive auction.
- Your double described your hand.
- So if you decide to bid, you must have a good reason to do so.